

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 – 123. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELED)

Claim 124. (CANCELED)

Claim 125. (CANCELED)

Claim 126. (CANCELED)

Claim 127. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELED)

Claim 128. (CANCELED)

Claim 129. (CANCELED)

Claim 130. (CANCELED)

Claims 131 – 192. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELED)

Claim 193. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A wheel comprising:

a peripheral wheel rim;

a central hub with a central axle and an outer flange;

a plurality of pretensioned spokes extending between the rim and hub, wherein said spokes have a first portion connected to said rim and a second portion opposed to said first portion and connected to said hub;

a cavity formed within at least one of said outer flange and said rim for connection with at least one of said spokes, wherein the cavity is oriented axially and the spoke includes a bent region;

wherein at least one of said first portion and said second portion of said at least one spoke is joined to at least one of said outer flange and said rim by means of a deformed engagement in a deformed engagement region, said cavity surrounding and enclosing the cross-section of said spoke at said deformed engagement region; and

wherein said deformed engagement results in a connection to resist relative movement between said cavity and at least one of said first portion and said second portion of said at least one spoke at said engagement region.

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Claim 194. (CANCELED)

Claim 195. (CANCELED)

Claim 196. (CANCELED)

Claim 197. (CANCELED)

Claim 198. (CANCELED)

Claim 199. (CANCELED)

Claim 200. (CANCELED)

Claim 201. (CANCELED)

Claim 202. (CANCELED)

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Claim 203. (CANCELED)

Claim 204. (CANCELED)

Claim 205. (CANCELED)

Claim 206. (CANCELED)

Claim 207. (CANCELED)

Claim 208. (CANCELED)

Claim 209. (CANCELED)

Claim 210. (CANCELED)

Claim 211. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A wheel according to claim 193, wherein said bent region is external to said deformed engagement region.

Claim 212. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A wheel according to claim 211, wherein at least one of said rim and outer flange includes a spoke guiding portion that is located external to said deformed engagement region, wherein said spoke guiding portion serves to support said spoke in said bent region.

Claim 213. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A wheel according to claim 212, including an annular supporting element that surrounds said axle, wherein said annular supporting element includes said spoke guiding portion.

Claim 214. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A wheel according to claim 193, including at least one reinforcement element contacting said at least one of said rim and said outer flange, wherein said reinforcement element serves to reinforce said at least one of said rim and said outer flange to resist stress and deflection associated with spoke tensile forces.

Claim 215. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A wheel according to claim 214, wherein said reinforcement element is connected to said outer flange and is a continuous annular element, including a central opening to surround said axle, and wherein said reinforcement element provides at least one of radial and hoop stresses reinforcement to said outer flange.

Claim 216. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A wheel according to claim 214, wherein said at least one of said spokes is positioned to contact said reinforcement element.

Claim 217. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A wheel according to claim 214, wherein said reinforcement element is an annular guide ring which is of a harder material than the hub flange.

Claim 218. (NEW)

A wheel, comprising:

a peripheral wheel rim;

a central hub with a central axle and an outer flange;

a plurality of pretensioned spokes extending between the rim and hub, wherein said spokes have a first portion connected to said rim and a second portion opposed to said first portion and connected to said hub, further comprising means for adjusting tension in the plurality of pretensioned spokes; and

a preformed cavity formed within at least one of said outer flange and said rim for connection with at least one of said spokes,

wherein at least one of said first portion and said second portion of said at least one spoke is joined to at least one of said outer flange and said rim by means of a deformed engagement in a deformed engagement region, said cavity enclosing the cross section of said spoke at said deformed engagement region, wherein said deformed engagement region is formed by interaction between said spoke and preformed cavity wherein one of (1) the preformed cavity is deformed by the spoke and (2) the spoke is deformed by the preformed cavity; and

including at least one reinforcement element contacting said at least one of said rim and said outer flange, wherein said reinforcement element serves to reinforce said at

least one of said rim and said outer flange to resist stress and deflection associated with spoke tensile forces, wherein at least one of said spokes is positioned to contact said reinforcement element; and

wherein said deformed engagement results in a connection to resist relative movement between said cavity and at least one of said first portion and second portion of said spoke at said deformed engagement region.

Claim 219. (NEW)

A wheel comprising:

a peripheral wheel rim;

a central hub with a central axle and an outer flange;

a plurality of pretensioned spokes extending between the rim and hub, wherein said spokes have a first portion connected to said rim and a second portion opposed to said first portion and connected to said hub, further comprising means for adjusting tension in the plurality of pretensioned spokes; and

a preformed cavity formed within at least one of said outer flange and said rim for connection with at least one of said spokes,

wherein at least one of said first portion and said second portion of said at least one spoke is joined to at least one of said outer flange and said rim by means of a deformed engagement in a deformed engagement region, said cavity enclosing the cross-section of said spoke at said deformed engagement region, wherein said deformed engagement region is formed by interaction between said spoke and preformed cavity wherein one of (1) the preformed cavity is deformed by the spoke and (2) the spoke is deformed by the preformed cavity; and

including at least one reinforcement element contacting said at least one of said rim and said outer flange, wherein said reinforcement element serves to reinforce said at least one of said rim and said outer flange to resist stress and deflection associated with spoke tensile forces, wherein said reinforcement element is an annular guide ring which is of a harder material than the hub flange; and

wherein said deformed engagement results in a connection to resist relative movement between said cavity and at least one of said first portion and second portion of said spoke at said deformed engagement region.